

"OLD PARKY"

FEBRUARY

2010

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WE ARE ON THE WEB

VISIT THE EXCELLENT BRANCH WEB

SITE TO SEE ALL THE LATEST NEWS AND MEET LONG LOST FRIENDS. - www.juniorleaders.co.uk



Committees Members: Larry Inge, - President David Bishop - Chairman, Peter O'Callaghan - Vice Chairman & Communication. Dave Ormsby - Treasurer Mick Dobson - Branch & Minutes Secretary, Simon Crowley - Newsletter Editor & Standard Bearer, , Nigel Spencer - Serving Member.

Gentlemen,

We are now in the year 2010 - looks a bit like a science fiction film title doesn't it!

And no doubt our 10th anniversary bash seems a long way away now, but I for one think of it as our best get together to date. Speaking to many of you in the weeks after, I know that view was shared by most so I think we can definitely call it a grand success. Of course the venues helped, the Hotel and the marvellous Town Hall, but also Gen. Sir John and Lady Jean gave an air of gravitas and were typically gracious and keen to interact with us all - which helped to create a great atmosphere once again.

I thought on the whole that the Hotel staff looked after us very well, and I certainly didn't hear anybody complaining - I always thank my lucky stars that I don't have to try and please so many at once as hard working hotel staff do - all I need do is bombard folk with whistling balloons, stick a straw up my nose and my work is done.

I know that Pete O'Callaghan worked tirelessly again liaising with the staff both at the Hotel and the Town Hall, but his task was made less onerous by the fact that everyone was so very helpful, especially the rather large and imposing chap from the Town Hall who couldn't have been more amenable, even if he did see fit to seat me under the Royal Navy's flag - my Ex Matelot Father found this most amusing!

Konrad Tapp did us proud again with some super photos of the whole affair, and also provides a moral service for those unable to remember actually being there..

As a Branch we seem to be in good health, and look forward to planning for our 11th weekend in October 2010. It just remains for me to wish you all, on behalf of the Committee a Healthy and Happy New Year, and we look forward to hearing from you all and seeing you again in October - "Ubique"!

COMMITTEE NEWS

Branch Accounts

The Branch Accounts were audited on 23RD January 2010 by Messrs Kirby & Atkins . Thank you for giving up your Saturday to perform an important function.

Branch 11th Anniversary

Peter O' Callaghan is currently liaising with the Ramada Hotel at Whitfield, Dover for this year's Reunion and by all accounts all goes well at this stage, which can only be good for all of us. You should find sample paperwork for the event with this Newsletter, and we should hope and expect to be looked after at least as well as we were for our Glorious 10th! If you have any burning questions, or, requests regarding the event and Hotel, please contact Dave Bishop.

david@dcbishop.freeserve.co.uk.

Branch Subscriptions

At this years AGM it was proposed and carried that the Branch subscriptions remain at £10:00 per annum to assist defer the cost of the 15th Anniversary, and the Newsletter. It was also agreed that this subscription will be reviewed after the Anniversary and reduced if agreed by the AGM of that year.

MEMBERSHIP AS AT JANUARY 2010.

The Branch currently has 121 fully paid up members, as against 146 last year. There are many reasons for this drop, but we must remind members to keep up to date with their membership, and to let other ex Junior Leaders know about the branch and our annual Reunions. We all speak to Ex Sappers who turn out to have been in Boy Service, but who are not members. Please sing the praises of our comradeship so that we can keep the Branch alive!

BRANCH FINANCES AS AT JANUARY 2010.

Bearing in mind the relative small size of our Branch, we are in good financial health. Full details of the very hard work Dave Ormsby puts in as Treasurer can be seen on the website in the documents section, where you may view rows and rows of figures if that's your bag..

In short, the cash "value" of the Branch is £6,612.14p, and the branch value as a whole, with stock etc taken into account is £9,274.70. There will still be some adjustment to come from the 2009 Reunion, but in any event we seem to be doing well, which all helps when booking the next, 11th, Reunion.

10th ANNIVERSARY POLO SHIRTS (Black)

We still have a number of the excellent polo shirts emblazoned with Branch Loga. As the moment has now passed, you may obtain one on a first - come / first - served basis for the price of postage alone (£2.50). Please contact Dave Ormsby, Branch Treasurer soonest to avoid disappointment. His details can be found on the website www.juniorleadersrs.co.uk (a shameless' plug)

Doug Hamilton-Cox and his walk from Dartmoor to Wootton Bassett 2009 in aid of Help for Heroes.

I relish the opportunity to champion the excellent work done by Doug Hamilton-Cox in 2009 in aid for Help for Heroes. I précis it here, but you can read the whole account, written by Doug by visiting our website at www.rejuniorleaders.co.uk.

Doug completed a walk from Dartmoor to Wootton Bassett on September 8th, and as a result has collected £12,500 for the very deserving Help for Heroes charity, which aims to care for our injured Service personnel returning from duty in Afghanistan and other theatres.

Headley Court is the main rehabilitation centre, and has certainly taken a place in the public consciousness of late. No less in the minds of all right thinking people is the Town of Wootton Bassett, through which the funeral corteges pass while respects are paid by well wishers from across the Country.

Doug left his home in Bridford on foot through Devon and Somerset and on to Wiltshire, meeting many great people on the way. His account goes some way to restoring a little faith in humanity and the nature of giving as, for the most part, he was treated very well.

It also serves, in my humble opinion, to show that there are still folk out there like Doug who has a will to help others and think of themselves second. In that respect Doug has our admiration and pride, but I'm sure we would all agree that these are the qualities that our Service Men and Women possess over and above others, and that the Country and society lost out in a big way with the demise of Junior Soldiering, and the desecration of modern standards in recent years.

Doug is and has been a stalwart of our Branch, and is a very self effacing man - but I'd like to record here how very grateful we all are to him and other ex FREDs who continue to raise the profile of our branch countrywide.

Doug is planning another walk 2010. From his home to Selley Oak Hospital. Details on the website: www.juniorleadersre.co.uk (another shameless plug)

During our January meeting, mention was made of the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire. Mick Dobson and I had the rare privilege of being present at the dedication of the Royal Engineers Memorial, which stands proudly at the entrance to the whole site (fitting that one should see it first as you go in, and last as you leave!).

It really is an awe inspiring and sobering place to visit and pay your respects to the Fallen from all three services and others who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

In any event, for more information visit www.thenma.org.uk or call 01283792333.

The Arboretum is located at Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffs.DE13 7AR.

A REQUEST FOR RETURN OF ITEMS BORROWED.

It has been brought to the attention of the Committee by staff from the Dover Harbour Board Sports and social club, that a degree of subsidence has been experienced near to the bell tower.

It is suspected that one of our members saw fit to remove a quantity of ballast and small pebbles from the base of said tower, possibly for some garden adornments or small construction works.

The coach driver returning members to the Hotel from the Drumhead service reported that one of the items of luggage required a four man lift and made a rattling noise.

Would this member, at his or her convenience, please replace said items at the Bell tower to avoid further embarrassment and collapse?

Thank you.



The Committee.

Don't let that attempt at humour put you off!
Please read through the Hotel/venue details at
your leisure and book early to avoid disappointment.

The main function of this Branch is to allow us all to get together once a Year at the spiritual home of The Junior Leaders Regiment RE, so be a part of it.

WWW.REJUNIORLEADERS.CO.UK!!

UBIOUE!!.

PLANNED MEETING AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM.

Earlier in the newsletter I alluded to the above location, and we plan to hold a meeting there on the 26th -27th June 2010. One consistency to this Committee lark seems to be that it's only ever the same old faces at meetings, even though as members you are all welcome to attend and give of your wisdom and intellect. Failing that you could stir our coffees.

Joking aside Gentlemen, it's no good being upset at the AGM if you could have made changes or suggestions to the running of the Branch earlier in the year, and we positively encourage you all to come along and see what we get up to.

Feel free to contact any of your Committee for arrangements via the website, and we look forward to seeing you at a wonderful location if you can make it.

All that remains now is to wish you all the very best of British Health, especially those members who have definitely felt better - our thoughts are with you Gentlemen. Keep in touch with each other - the bond between ex Service men and Women is far deeper than those strange civvy types have, and it's their loss. Organisations like ours help to give a little kick you know where, but we could all be a bit better at picking up the 'phone or typing a message a little more often!

ONCE A SAPPER – ALWAYS A SAPPER!!